

Perfin "S.S" (S6420.03 11,11 5½mm) Rosemary Smith.

In Bulletin 231 Pg.16 I had identified this perfin as being used by Stubbs Mercantile Office, London. In Tilles - S642.2 (S.S 10, 10 5mm) was already identified as used by the same office.

My identity was based on the following information:

I purchased a plain newspaper wrapper with ½d green 1880-81 issue stamp and killer NPB cancel - no date. The circular was still folded inside, obviously never having been taken out, because the 24 pages were folded but the tops and some sides had not been cut. It was impossible to read all pages until they had been slit open.

On the front page the circular was entitled "STUBBS' GUARDIAN OF COMMERCE INSTITUTE", the back page gave the information that the paper was printed by "WILLIAM CATE, 21 and 21¼ CURSITOR-STREET, IN THE CITY OF LONDON". (I have never seen such a number before in an address.) The Stubbs' Mercantile Circular was issued to assist merchants and traders etc to "avoid Bad Debts, recover Overdue Accounts and notify of Liquidation of Bankrupt & Insolvent Estates". The paper was full of details, arranged in various categories (county, trade etc) taken from Court proceedings against those who had had judgements against them.

I did not try to open up the sheets of paper into the separate pages at that time and because of the previous identity of S642.2 in Tilles, I reported S642.3 as the same user.

Last year however, because of the publishing of the 'S' Edwards pages, I looked far more closely at all my 'S' covers. I carefully opened up the sheets of the afore mentioned circular without cutting the edges and found inside an advertising-cum-order form. It was for a book, just published, called "THE BILLS OF SALE ACTS 1878 & 1882". The order form had to be returned to Messrs. Stevens & Sons, 119 Chancery Lane, London W.C.

I have a number of covers from Steven & Sons but one in particular is another newswrapper with 3d Jubilee dated 1899. The wrapper is printed "From Stevens & Sons, Limited, Law Publishers, Booksellers and Exporters, Proprietors of the Law Journal Reports, 119 4 120 Chancery Lane, London W.C."

This made me question the original identification in Tilles and my own for S6420.02/3. It seems far more likely that the publishers of the Stubbs Mercantile Circular were Stevens & Sons Ltd. and they distributed the circulars to the subscribing members of Stubbs' Guardian of Commerce Institute under plain wrapper, direct from their office, using their own perfined stamps.

The catalogue editor thinks this explanation is 'pretty plausible' suggesting I write about it in the Bulletin. He intends to modify his records to read - Stevens & Sons (distributors of Stubbs' Mercantile Circular) - for both S6420.02 and .03.

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